



Submitted to: Mayor Jason Gray and Castle Rock Town Council
Report by: Stacy Garmon, President & CEO, Castle Rock Chamber of Commerce
Submitted: July 31, 2024
Re: Castle Rock Chamber's January-July 2024 Mid-Year Reporting

Mission: The Castle Rock Chamber of Commerce cultivates a thriving business community through engagement, collaboration, and advocacy.

The scope of this Contract for Services with the Town of Castle Rock, the Chamber is responsible for coordinating the efforts of Business Support Services/Workforce programming, Talent Development, Community Marketing and Tourism efforts, and community signature events.

I. BUSINESS ASSISTANCE PROGRAMING

eXcelerate Business Professional Development continues to foster entrepreneurial activity by providing the essential information, infrastructure and resources required for successful business development and growth. The Chamber offers services and information at no cost to both start-ups and established businesses in Castle Rock. We strategize and plan relevant training events, workshops, and other programs to educate and equip business owners, executives, managers, and their employees.

MEASURABLE OUTCOMES of Business Assistance Programing:

- Professional Development training and major speaker events for business owners and their employees: four (4) events were conducted with over 100 attendees. Seminar topics and presenters include Mastering Networking, Engaging Employees through Neurodiversity (collaboration with Parker Chamber), Increasing your Marketing Strategy with the Power of Branding, Engaging Employees of all Generations.
- Future seminar topics include Understanding the Power of Social Media, Hiring, Retaining and Retraining Employees with Unique Strategies.
- One-on-one business consulting – We collaborate with the Douglas County Library and the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) to provide appropriate services, recommendations, business counseling and mentoring.

Workforce Readiness | Talent Pipeline DC focuses on workforce readiness efforts, which is a multi-industry led program and serves to champion a stronger Castle Rock through collaborative partnerships between business, government, and education partners. Together, we foster a pro-business environment supporting a strong workforce and talent pipeline for the success and sustainability of our local businesses. We work on a collaborative conversation regarding the

workforce needs of our businesses and the opportunities to support educators, students, and families for a strong talent readiness pipeline into the future.

MEASURABLE OUTCOMES of Talent Pipeline Douglas County:

- We led a successful and growing **Tours for Teachers program** in Fall 2023. This program is designed for educators to gain a better understanding of the current and future workforce needs and trends within the local economy. The program includes three learning days hosted at area employer locations, independent assignments, and exploration. In collaboration with the Douglas County School District and due to the growth of the program, the Castle Rock Chamber will be hosting two (2) Tours Programs – Fall 2024 and Spring 2025. Applications will open August 1st to DCSD administrators, counselors, and teachers.

The schedule (listed below) follows the Colorado Career Cluster Model utilized by DCSD CTE programs. Each of the six (6) tours will focus in different areas of Douglas County, continuing to show Castle Rock as the leader in Talent Development initiatives.

Fall 2024 Tours for Teachers

Tour 1 – September 12

Skilled Trades, Technical Sciences

Architecture / Construction

Manufacturing

Trades

Tour 2 – October 10

Health Science, Criminal Justice, Public Safety

Biology / Nursing

Sports Medicine

Police / Fire / EMT

Biotech – Chemistry / Pharmacy

Tour 3 – November 7

Agriculture, Natural Resources & Energy

Utilities

Colorado Agricultural Leadership Foundation

Food Products / Processing Systems

Spring 2025 Tours for Teachers

Tour 1 – January 16

Engineering, Technology & Media Arts

Computer Science / Cybersecurity

Graphic Design / Web Development

Game Design

Tour 2 – February 20

Hospitality, Human Services, Education

Business Services – Accounting / Finance / Banking

Non-Profit / Social Work

Tourism / Hospitality

Real Estate – Residential / Commercial

Tour 3 – March 13

Business, Marketing, Entrepreneurship, Finance & Public Administration

Digital Marketing / Professional Sales

Entrepreneurship

Legal Services

Public Management

- The Chamber continues to partner with A/D Works! and the Douglas County School District on virtual and in person **Job Fairs** located at ACC Sturm Campus and DCSD campus.
- The Chamber will continue to host the premier Castle Rock Job Boards promoting businesses' open staffing positions. This service is available to both members and non-members of the Chamber to promote the opportunity for our residents to work for local businesses.

II. SPECIAL EVENTS & TOURISM PROJECTS

Community Event Management

Community character and events have been identified by our residents through the Town's surveys as reasons why they love Castle Rock. Community events celebrate our hometown atmosphere. The Chamber takes pride in leading several of the community signature events with the partnership of the Town, CR Police Department, CR Fire Department, Downtown Alliance, and volunteer staffing. The Chamber continues to work towards improvement and increased quality by providing family-oriented entertainment, capturing and recording data, and evaluating the return on objectives of these events.

The Chamber's Contract of Service with the Town includes organizing, promoting, and implementation of the Douglas County Fair Parade (July 27), Colorado Artfest (September 7 & 8) and Starlighting (November 23) events.

Community event the Chamber has conducted in 2024 to date:

Douglas County Fair Parade (July 27, 2024) which kicks off the Douglas County Fair and Rodeo celebrates its 69th year. The Fair Parade exemplifies old-fashioned, hometown charm showcasing Castle Rock businesses, 4-H, veterans, high school marching bands, rodeo queens and dignitaries, and our first responders. Our goal is to feature our hometown ranching heritage and highlight our business community.

MEASURABLE OUTCOMES for the DC Fair Parade:

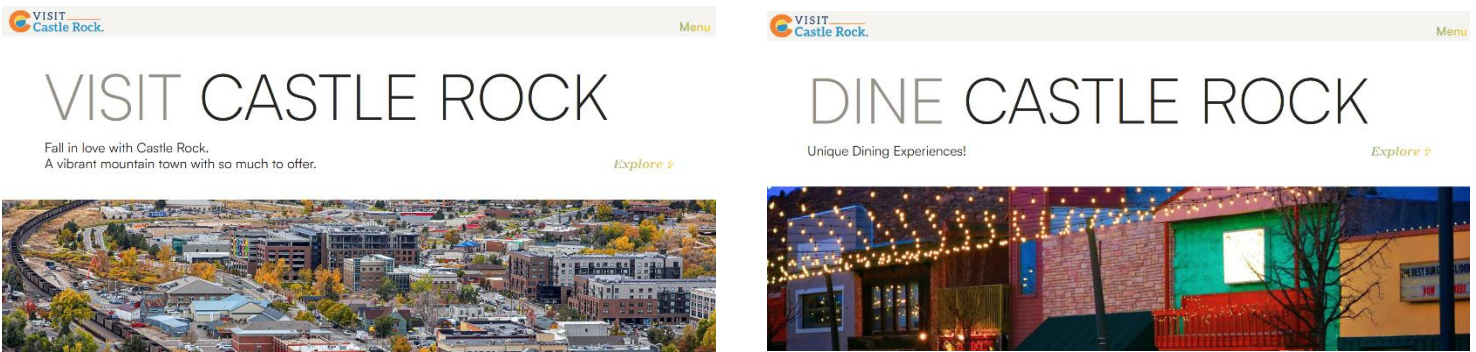
We welcomed 86 participants, twenty volunteers, seven judges, two winners, two emcees, and six Chamber staff. Preliminary reports show the Chamber website saw a 92.9% increase in users from

Organic Search from June to July and the Fair Parade page accounted for 42% of those users in July. The Chamber website was driving brand awareness for the Parade through Google Organic results.

III. COMMUNITY MARKETING AND SOCIAL MEDIA PROMOTION

To facilitate impactful community marketing, the Castle Rock Chamber continues to manage the VisitCastleRock.org website and Community Events Calendar with ongoing content curation. In an effort for our residents and visitors to receive a positive emotional and intellectual impression of our community, it is our intent to create wonderful experiences which will encourage a live, work, shop, play and stay environment. This site is visually engaging and interactive for the user (both residents and visitors) and allows local businesses, non-profit organizations, vendors, and event planners to submit their events to the Castle Rock community calendar. The goal is to keep our residents connected and give them a sense of community with enhanced social, cultural, and recreational experiences.

In 2024, the Chamber will be revitalizing the VisitCastleRock.org website. Here is a sneak peek of the mockup design.



Cross marketing efforts have continued with our community partners – the Town of Castle Rock, Downtown Alliance and Douglas County, with the goal of expanding our communities’ events exposure.

The annual Castle Rock Livability magazine will be published in print and available digitally on the Chamber’s website. This magazine showcases Castle Rock’s strengths through photography and professionally written stories of Castle Rock’s community character.

The Chamber boasts superior customer service that embraces our new residents and visitors to the community with friendly assistance. The **Castle Rock Visitor Center**, housed in the Chamber’s offices, acts as the Town’s one-stop-shop for all things Castle Rock offering a welcoming and helpful face always ready to assist. We also provide Livability Community Guides and Castle Rock maps for our visitors.

MEASURABLE OUTCOMES of Community Marketing (January-July)

Our efforts to maintain our resident/community following and to emerge throughout the community as ‘the source’ for community information and events will continue as a top priority.

- Community Events Mailer (spring edition and fall edition), collaboration with Town of Castle Rock, Downtown Alliance, and Douglas County, were mailed to all Castle Rock residents promoting upcoming events and activities.
- VisitCastleRock.org page views – January to July is up 51% of organic users.
- The Chamber increased the number of email campaigns sent by 8.86% to include links to the Town events page and the DMA events page, with our clicks up 61.67%. Our subscribers total over 8,500 active contacts with 40% open rate promoting Castle Rock Community events, Town/County News, Legislative/Under the Dome updates, latest business resources and news, Member Happenings and Community Resources.

IV. COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT – Leadership Douglas County Program (LDC)

In its 25th year, LDC’s goals are to inspire participants in the work they do; strengthen participants personally and the organizations they serve; and facilitate a heightened sense of community connection to encourage individuals to take positions of civic and organizational leadership in the community.

MEASURABLE OUTCOMES of Leadership DC:

- LDC was created to ensure our community would continue to identify, educate, and motivate current and emerging leaders to improve Douglas County through personal and collective commitment. LDC seeks motivated, capable men and women from diverse professional backgrounds and supports best practices in setting standards of excellence.
- LDC completed its 24th class in June 2024, graduating twenty-three (23) class participants. Seventeen of the twenty-three class members either live and/or work in Castle Rock and are comprised of local businesses, non-profit, and public sector organizations. The program has graduated 448 LDC alumni since 2000.
- The 2024-2025 LDC Class will have 25 participants, the highest class participation since inception.
- This year, Douglas County non-profits will have the opportunity to submit an RFP to the class in hopes their community project will be chosen as the 2024-2025 class project.